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VIENNA DURING THE WAR.

'The spirit-stirring drum, the ear-piercing fife, and all the pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war,' are the sights and sounds which, from morn to dewy eve, arrest the attention of the wayfarer who saunters through Vienna's streets. It is to be inferred that English regiments, in Shakspeare's age, marched to music deeper and more harmonious than do the party-coloured host of our emperor, since the Austrian tambour gives out a very weak, harsh reverberation; and so far from spirit-stirring, it resembles nothing so much as thumping upon an old tin kettle.

One wonders whence come the multitudes of armed men that tramp, tramp along the faubourgs all day and all night long, *en route* for the railway. Along the faubourgs, I say—for though a military despotism reigns, soldiers may not march through the city, nor can the citizens be burdened with their billets, since they a long time since erected two spacious suburban barracks at their own cost, to obviate that inconvenience. In England, the Buffs only (formerly, the London Trainbands) of the whole British army, are allowed to march through London with 'drums beating and colours flying.' An exactly similar privilege is enjoyed here by the regiment of Cuirassiers, commanded by Count Ignace Hardigg, and formerly by Dampierre, who rescued the Emperor Frederic II, when, during an insurrection, he was imprisoned in his own palace. There is therefore a concentration of the military on this Wieden glacis especially, the three railway stations being not far off; and the roads all day long are literally blocked up by their marchings and counter-marchings, by batteries of artillery and baggage-trains of endless length. These wagons, marked Braten (Beef), Victualien (Food), Ambulance, &c., are strong, and perfectly well made. How unlike some three or four hundred sent out from England, which I saw during the Crimean war at the camp of Buyukdere, on the Bosphorus! Those resembled rickety carts, being painted lead colour, as if only half finished. The paint did not effectually conceal the badness of the material; but until I opened my pocket-knife, and cut deeply into shafts, spokes, felloes, and nave, I did not suspect that, one and all, they were made of the commonest deal! Just conceive the entire wheels of a vehicle destined to be rattled through rocky mountain-passes, made of the very softest known wood—and the cheapest! It was a prodigious fraud, the detection of which was, of course, no red-tapist's business. A week after, I was sent to convoy sixty of these wretched tumbrils a distance of seven miles only—the first

service they had performed. We left twenty of the number in splinters by the roadside, all being more or less shaken; and some of those sent out next day to fetch home the wounded and missing, deposited themselves amongst the rocky fragments likewise, and were seen no more at head-quarters. Nothing of this sort could happen in the Austrian army.

Still, in the War department of this empire there is red-tapism enough and to spare. A hundred corruptions and mal-practices remain unaltered from year to year, merely because they are traditions of the past; princes, archdukes, and *grafs* or counts, irrespective of personal fitness and professional training, claiming, by a sort of prescriptive right, all the superior military grades. Feudalism lingers here fully as much as it did with us in the reign of our second Charles. Count Benedic is, I believe, their only general officer sprung from the citizen class, like our own lamented Havelock. Of the 25,000 commissioned officers in the service, 15,000 *only* are noble; as regards the rest, government patronage is very fairly distributed, as such matters go.

The dress, arms, and accoutrements of the Austrian troops are all first rate, and, in most instances, might serve as a model for Europe. One battalion only—picked men of each regiment—carries the complicated modern rifle-musket; the rest are armed with guns of smooth bore, but with rifle-sights; this simple construction being considered best for the rude and awkward peasant-recruit. The Austrian military tunic is for the most part white; their greatcoats also are of the same colour, which exposes them to be picked off by the enemy's riflemen, even more certainly than our own 'line of red.' In the late battle of Solferino, also at Magenta and Melegnano, this was fatally exemplified; eighteen or twenty officers, with five hundred of their men, being the amount of loss to many regiments. At this hot season, both officers and men—except when on parade—wear uniforms of brown linen, with pink cuffs and collars, an officer being distinguished by three silver stars on the collar. He has also, in many regiments, a tunic of a fine brilliantly white sort of moleskin, both the one and the other looking exceedingly cool and handsome. These linen uniforms are also most sensibly worn on a march and in the field of battle. The emperor has recently issued a general order—in imitation of the French practice—that his soldiers shall go into action 'without their packs;' instead of being nearly prostrated under the sweltering load of knapsack, greatcoat, shoes, and a haversack crammed with bread and sausages. The cream of the Austrian infantry are the Tyrolese jäger regiments, the most loyal, perhaps, of all the diverse

nationalities fighting under the imperial eagles. They are ready to shed the last drop of their blood in expelling the allies from the plains of Lombardy. Yet theirs is not the blind, unreflective devotion of a Highland clan. With a keen sense of their rights as freemen, like our famous Irish volunteers of the last century, they make no secret of their intention not to lay aside their arms until Austria has conceded what will fully entitle them to bear that sacred name.

Bohemia furnishes to Austria the finest heavy cavalry of Europe. In her vast plains, the peasant-lad, employed in tending droves of wild horses, which he catches with the lasso, manages, before he is four years old, a bare-backed steed, wild as that of Mazeppa. Consequently, Bohemians dispense with the riding-master and his school, sitting like centaurs in their demi-pique saddles. Hungarians are their light horsemen. There never was a knight like the brave Magyar. The bravest of the brave—how splendid they appear in their gorgeous uniforms! There is said to be one English officer at least serving in every regiment, and well do they fraternise with their chivalrous brethren in arms. All the world is aware of the peculiar style in which the hussar wears his pelisse or over-jacket, but few know why. Many years since, Hungary was overrun by the Turks, and a large body of them suddenly surprised a Hungarian squadron of hussars early in the morning, whilst they were dressing. With one arm only in the sleeve of the pelisse, they vaulted into the saddle, and so plied their sabres, even with this incumbrance, that they drove the Turks pell-mell across a river, and nearly annihilated them. To perpetuate this dashing exploit, the Hungarian light cavalry were ordered evermore to carry their pelisses as we see them, a fashion imitated throughout Europe.

Croats or Cravats—the ancient neck-gear of whose officers has given name to that portion of dress in every European language—are an armed frontier peasantry, originally organised to keep off the Turks, and likewise their plague. They hold land by doing military service with the army in time of war, and are huge, big-boned men, but having no stamina, are laughed at by their military comrades. This comparative feebleness arises from a very amiable and unselfish cause. Being for the most part married men, they husband even their miserable regimental pay of five farthings per day, that they may carry back something to assist in giving bread to support the wife and child, in their village home. Hence, the Croat recruit is lean and lanky. 'A soldier who does not eat well,' say the Austrians, 'is not good for fighting.'

Next in estimation to the Bohemian heavy, and the Hungarian light horse, are the free jägers of Tyrol. One cannot repress a smile at the perfect self-complacency with which certain persons in England seem to regard the formation of a corps of riflemen as the result of some few months' drill. The rifleman of the Tyrol is trained to his favourite weapon from boyhood. As soon as he can hold it straight, it forms his constant companion. He is a hunter born. In that thinly peopled, rocky land, targets, formed of a slice sawn off from the trunk of some ancient pine, may be safely fixed almost anywhere. The sharp crack of his rifle is heard there each evening towards sundown; the falcon's head and neck dried, and the beard of the chamois—trophies of his marksmanship—are worn in the hat of every Tyrolean chasseur; and these singular decorations, it may be remarked, are exhibited in numbers in every hatter's shop in Vienna.

The hunter of the chamois starts on his dangerous enterprise by night, in order that he may reach those mountain pastures, where, at break of day, the chamois comes to feed, ere the shepherd brings his

flock there. Having espied his game from afar, he climbs from one rocky pinnacle to another to get above it; and in approaching it, he creeps along some friendly ravine, or hides behind a cliff. When got sufficiently near to discern the animal's horns, by which he knows he is within rifle distance, he rests his piece upon a rock, adjusts his aim with perfect coolness, and rarely misses. The gun is a rifled carbine, often double, though the barrel itself is a single one, the two being placed one above the other. I have just seen one of this remarkable construction for sale in Vienna. If the chamois falls, he runs to his prey, and makes sure of him by the *coup de grâce* with his hunting-knife. He then looks about, reconnoitring the road by which to regain his native village. If the way be difficult, he skins the chamois, taking only his hide; but if the road be practicable, he hoists his game upon his shoulders, and bears it with him, often great distances, to his home. Sometimes, on the other hand, the vigilant animal, perceiving the approach of the hunter, flies with extraordinary swiftness, and halts only upon the most inaccessible rocks. Here begin the fatigues of the hunter, which accustom him to the long marches, the spare diet, and all other accidents of a military service that await him. Night often overtakes him in the very midst of his pursuit, but he still holds on, knowing that what stops him also stops the chamois. He therefore settles himself down for the night, not at the foot of a tree, as does the hunter of the plain, but at the bottom of a rock, or upon a heap of stones, where there is not the smallest shelter from a storm. There, without fire or light, after a very frugal supper, he falls asleep, dreaming of the path the chamois has taken. Awakened at day-dawn by the fresh morning air, he rises from his hard couch, shivering with cold, shoulders his game-bag and his rifle, and after a small dram of brandy, hurries off with undiminished energy to renew the chase.

Such is the training of that corps of sharpshooters which form the pride of the Austrian army. Francis Joseph himself commands the 1st regiment, consisting of 7000 men. In Italy, they were opposed to the French *Chasseurs de Vincennes*, yet no victory ever crowned the Austrian arms. Those same chasseurs, with perhaps the Tyrolean also, would, be it remembered, in case of invasion, be opposed to our raw levies.

How thoroughly contemptuous and neglectful is the behaviour of the military despot ruling this country to his subjects! First of all, he addresses to the army only, his proclamation announcing the armistice and preliminaries of peace, which Queen Victoria would have announced to her people through the parliament. Next, he comes back to Luxemburg, a palace about the same distance from Vienna as Windsor from London, and there remains in strict seclusion, never deigning to visit his metropolis, and shew himself to his lieges. To be sure, he wears no laurels. From his first and last essay at the generalship of 290,000 men, have resulted the almost immediate defeat of the centre of that vast host, and the slaughter of nearly 20,000 men. After the battle of Magenta, General Gyulai was made the scape-goat. He fell into disgrace, was displaced from command, and retired to Baden, a little watering-place near this city. The officers and soldiers of the garrison abused and cursed him publicly in every *café* and *gasthaus*. Yet how stands the truth? The ignorant interference of the emperor, who sent a peremptory order to stop his division when marching into the field, was alone to blame. The order being delivered by Hess, his superior officer, he of course obeyed. Hess detained him at a council of war for four hours. During that interval, Magenta was lost. The French, Sardinians, and Piedmontese, had been repulsed on

all sides; Gyulai's timely arrival would have secured victory, more glorious to the Austrian arms than that of Aspern, for Napoleon and his whole Guard were at one time in extreme jeopardy; and there would have been perhaps a live French emperor for the Viennese to make a Sunday lion of, a prisoner of war in some one of the imperial palaces, everywhere thrown open to the public on that day.

Talking of prisoners of war, I must not omit to mention the curious fact, of an army everywhere beaten in the field, without having gained a single advantage, ostentatiously sending home a batch of captive French, Sardinians, and Piedmontese. They must have been deserters, or picked up as stragglers from time to time, although a telegraphic dispatch published in the Austrian journals, announces that 'we (the Austrians) have prisoners from almost every regiment of the allied army,' and closes with its invariably mendacious assertion, that 'although the enemy was greatly superior, we retired in excellent order.' So regularly ends the last paragraph of every official dispatch. Did an editor dare to make a comment, venture upon a surmise, or print an authentic letter from soldier or officer present in the camp? he and his journal would be soon amongst the things that are not. There are no leading articles, and every intended paragraph, after being put in type, is sent to a chief of the press, of whom there are many: one for the Aulic Council, one for the Foreign Office, and a third for the Internal Department. Should the paragraph or letter be sufficiently guarded and palatable, it is returned, otherwise certain paragraphs are struck out, and others substituted; but usually they suppress it altogether. I have been introduced to one of these *chefs*. I found him in his bureau, surrounded by piles of foreign papers of every nation, amongst which the broadsheet of the *Times* appeared conspicuous. I fancied myself in the hall of an inquisitor. The politics of a certain new English paper were being canvassed. He expressed a great wish to see a number, and declared himself much comforted by my report of the general dislike to Louis Napoleon entertained by all classes of Englishmen. He had thought, on the contrary, that the emperor was but too popular.

But to return to the war-prisoners—about 700. They were marched from the northern station to Franz Joseph's *caserne*, destined for their temporary prison. A great crowd marched with them through the streets, and remained in the open space in front of the barrack, which is a splendid castellated brick building, nearly a quarter of a mile in length. The prisoners soon appeared at the open windows, some of them sitting on the window-sill with their legs hanging outwards. The people called out to them to let down some means of receiving their little contributions. Soon a score or two of lines formed of braces, pocket-handkerchiefs knotted together, sashes, turbans, pantaloons torn to strips, and fragments of twine, were fluttering in the breeze, each with a bag at its extremity. The good-natured citizens quickly filled them over and over again with such modest dainties as sausages, cheese, eggs, a little coffee and sugar, cherries, of which large quantities are brought into Vienna; with pipes, bundles of cigars, bread, &c. One little boy contributed a single roll of fine bread, given him probably for his own supper. One solitary can of beer reached its destination safely; a wonder, considering the frail material by which they drew it up. At last a Piedmontese, with grateful gestures, exclaimed: 'Friends, we thank you; we have enough to eat, but suffer intense thirst.' Immediately exertions are on foot to relieve this want also. Then an Austrian soldier on guard in one of the rooms, leaning his body out of the window, exclaimed, as he threw his arm around the neck of a French non-commissioned officer: 'See, I have crossed bayonets with

this man in the field of battle; he was then my enemy; he is now a prisoner, and I embrace him as a friend and brother; make for him a little collection.' There was a murmur of applause; a score of lads went about with their caps, to receive contributions. The *kreuzers*, or farthings, were rattling merrily, when suddenly, as if springing from the ground, a hated commissary of police made his appearance; at his signal, the numerous sentinels drove back the multitude with their muskets. Two men with bayonets marched up to a young man who held his cap, and walked him off to prison, while the commissary's myrmidons arrested the boys. The soldier-orator, the cause of all this movement, no doubt paid dearly for his eloquence; and later in the evening, an excited Italian, who publicly remarked that the people need not regret that the French were victorious, since they brought freedom in their march, was seized immediately, and carried off by a guard. I shrewdly suspect this indiscreet patriot will never again quaff a cup of Hungarian wine in any gasthaus of Vienna or elsewhere. The populace shewed no sign, remaining dumb as fishes. They are better drilled in what the Austrian government terms the maintenance of public order—that is, they have a craven terror of the police. Ask a gentleman if it be true that the emperor has arrived at Vienna from the army, as reported. 'Sir,' he responds, 'I cannot tell; it is dangerous to talk of such matters.' I once conversed about the battle of Magenta in a rather high tone to a native friend, because, in the great thoroughfares, the loose axle-trees of public vehicles almost drown conversation. He evidently got uneasy, cast hasty glances right and left over his shoulder, and then fore and aft, as seamen term it. At last, he burst forth with: 'Monsieur, excusez, mais il ne faut pas crier comme ça, dans les rues; c'est dangereuse.' Off he shuffled without leave-taking, and plunged into a café close at hand. I dived after him, but passing through the crowd, he had bolted by the opposite door.

The wounded at Solferino are flocking into the city. I meet them everywhere in my walks about the faubourgs, pale, halting, and their heads and arms bound up with bandages. A Viennese surgeon directs my attention to the great proportion injured in their arms and hands only, but is not able to explain the peculiarity, unless by attributing their hurts to sabre cuts. A tall Hungarian grenadier, in his graceful uniform, light-blue tight pantaloons, and ankle-laced boots—the men have, almost without exception, slender ankles, and uncommonly well-shaped feet—is slowly creeping towards me, his emaciated frame supported by a stick. Just at the same moment arrives, with wicker-basket on her arm, one of those jolly-looking grisettes forming a very remarkable class in Vienna, but who herself evidently belongs to some rustic suburban locality, more favourable to the development of female charms. She wears the usual coquettish jerkin with short skirts, and her nether garments, unconscious of bustle or crinoline, are plaited and fashioned after a mode peculiarly their own. The hair of most German women is superb, and that of a Vienna grisette yields not to that of the first princess in the land; they wear no bonnets, but carry a tiny parasol as a defence from the ardour of the sun, that 'kisses all he meets,' and thus their dark, luxuriant, well-oiled tresses are always seen to the best advantage. One of these bonny lasses finds herself opposite the maimed Hungarian. She stops short, and her broad, good-tempered visage expands into an expression of the most intense sympathy. A hand mechanically slips through her pocket-hole, and withdraws a handsome French purse, which the grisettes, and even the soldiers, always carry to keep their farthings in. Selecting a six-kreuzer piece—a coin of old bell-metal plated with silver—she gently slips it into

his palm, and then, with gaze oft turned back upon the object of her commiseration, hurries off to execute her mistress's errands. Never do I remember to have seen the parable of the good Samaritan more beautifully illustrated than in the unostentatious charity of the pretty grisette.

The emperor Francis Joseph is now in his Vienna palace. He looked deadly pale, and the *Kaiserin*, or empress, shed abundance of tears on that day, fatal for his army, when he started for the camp. His appearance has not been improved by the fatigues of war endured under an Italian sun. The world knows but a small portion of what took place at that memorable interview between the emperors in that eight hours at Villafranca. One fact, however, I can vouch for—ever since the publication of the armistice, there has been no cessation, but rather an increase of activity in the war department. The railways are wholly monopolised; artillery, horses, and military supplies of all sorts block up the stations, and are despatched to Italy by every train. This looks strangely. The only troops who came back were two or three Italian regiments—runaways—who arrived at dusk, and with about threescore of their comrades disarmed in the centre, were marched off with bayonets fixed, to the barracks, no music sounding. The men in the middle were actual mutineers—the whole regiment little better—who had refused to fire when brought face to face with the allies at Solferino. With such elements of discord in its ranks, can it be wondered at that the Austrian army should have been always worsted?

The government is said to be exceedingly savage with ours. It is confidently asserted here that Napoleon meditates an immediate collision with us, and that part of the secret conference at Villafranca was an alliance to that end. The Austrians here are giving the English the cold shoulder already; every Viennese of any intelligence speaks of a French descent upon Great Britain as the next great move on the imperial chess-board. We trust that the 'Parvenu Ludwig,' as an Austrian caricature calls him, will find himself checkmated.

NOTHING LOST.

WHEN Lord Palmerston was Home Secretary, under Lord John Russell's premiership, he had to attend to sanitary reform, and to many other subjects far removed from the foreign diplomacy with which his name is more especially connected. While so engaged, he propounded an aphorism which is excellent both for its epigrammatic neatness and for its truth: 'Dirt is only matter in the wrong place!' If society would duly act upon this truth, we should save millions a year; if, instead of considering dirt and refuse, sweepings and cuttings, scourings and washings, to be valueless, we could only bring ourselves to believe that they are good things in wrong places, we should be better both in health and in pocket than we are now. Practical chemists have long known this; medical men not unfrequently impress the fact on their patients; patentees of new inventions often shew an appreciation of it; and the world is getting wiser thereon every day. A few months after the close of the Great Exhibition of 1851, Dr Lyon Playfair gave a lecture on some of the results of that wonderful display, taking for his principal topic the recent advances in industrial chemistry. The production of perfumes was not the least curious of these examples. The lecturer shewed that beautiful perfumes are now produced from the most trivial, and often from the most fetid and repulsive substances. If this were all, it would be a triumph of chemistry, and a benefit to mankind; but, unfortunately, the crooked commercial morality with which

we are all too much acquainted, stepped in, and encouraged a system of cheating and deception. It is scientific to obtain from decayed or unsightly refuse a perfume similar in odour to that obtained from a beautiful fruit or flower; but it is dishonest to call it by the name of that fruit or flower, and to charge a high price accordingly. 'A peculiar fetid oil,' said Dr Playfair, 'termed fusel oil, is formed in making brandy and whisky; this fusel oil, distilled with sulphuric acid and acetate of potash, gives the "oil of pears." The "oil of apples" is made from the same fusel oil, by distillation with sulphuric acid and bichromate of potash. The "oil of pine-apples" is obtained from a product of the action of putrid cheese on sugar, or by making a soap with butter, and distilling it with alcohol and sulphuric acid; and is now largely employed in England in making "pine-apple ale." "Oil of grapes" and "oil of cognac," used to impart the flavour of French cognac to British brandy, are little else than fusel oil. The artificial "oil of bitter almonds," now so largely employed in perfuming soap and for flavouring confectionary, is prepared by the action of nitric acid on the fetid oils of gas-tar. Many a fair forehead is damped with "Eau de Millefeurs," without knowing that its essential ingredient is derived from the drainage of cow-houses.'

But without dwelling further at present on the roguery involved in all such misnomers and masked substitutions, let us glance at some among the almost innumerable examples of honest utilisation of substances which used formerly to be denominated waste, or were at most regarded as possessing scarcely any appreciable value. Dr Lyon Playfair adverted to some of these examples: 'The clippings of the travelling tinker are mixed with the parings of horses' hoofs from the smithy, or the cast-off woollen garments of the inhabitants of the sister-isle, and soon afterwards, in the form of dyes of brightest blue, grace the dress of courtly dames. The main ingredient of the ink with which I now write was possibly once part of a broken hoop of an old beer-barrel. The bones of dead animals yield the chief constituent of lucifer-matches. The dregs of port-wine—carefully rejected by the port-wine drinker in decanting his favourite beverage—are taken by him in the morning, in the form of Seidlitz powders, to remove the effects of his debauch. The offal of the streets and the washings of coal-gas reappear carefully preserved in the lady's smelling-bottle, or are used by her to flavour "blanc mange" for her friends.' Very recently, this highly interesting subject has been traced throughout a much wider range by Mr P. L. Simmonds, an experienced authority on all that relates to the materials for manufactures. In a paper read before the Society of Arts, he gave a wonderful variety of instances of the utilisation of apparently unimportant substances. A bare enumeration of them would be beyond our limits; but it will be seen that—even leaving out all that concerns the devising of new forms of food for human beings, all that concerns the discovery of new fibrous substances for paper-making, and all the schemes for making town-sewage available as agricultural manure—the variety is very remarkable.

Beginning with animal substances, and with such parts of them as belong to the skin, hair, and wool, we find that the skin of the dog-fish is used to make an abrading substance analogous to sand-paper. Eel-skin is made by the Americans into ropes and whip-lashes. Sole-skin is used to refine coffee and other liquids, in the manner of isinglass. Porpoise and walrus skins are tanned into shoe-leather. Alligator-skin is tanned by the Texans into leather much resembling fine calf. Snake-skin is dressed to imitate shagreen. Old boots and shoes are 'vamped' up, in Monmouth Street and in Petticoat Lane, the

fractures doctored with 'clobber,' made of ground cinders and paste, and a little further life of usefulness given to them. In Yorkshire, there are 'waste-dealers,' who buy up all the odds and ends from the woollen factories, and sell it to 'shoddy' mill-owners at Leeds, Dewsbury, and Batley. These mill-owners work up the refuse wool into 'shoddy' or 'mungo,' mix it with a little new wool, and spin and weave it into broadcloth, doeskins, pilot-cloths, druggets, coarse carpeting, baize, and table-covers. Woollen rags, however dirty, are bought up, torn to shreds, cleaned, made into an inferior shoddy, and wrought into the cheapest kinds of pilot-cloths, beaver-teens, Petershams, mohairs, Talmas, Raglans, paletots, and other superbly named woollen fabrics. It is said that Leeds alone reproduces from rags as much wool annually as would represent the fleeces of four hundred thousand sheep. These rags may be the relics of worn-out clothing, tailors' cuttings, old worsted stockings, carpeting, &c.; and there are large quantities imported from abroad, in aid of our home-supply. A small portion, when ground up, makes flock-paper for paper-hangers; and another portion, chiefly carpet-waste, is used to stuff mattresses, and also as an ingredient in the manufacture of Prussian blue. All the delicate materials for ladies' dresses, known by the names of balzarines, Orleans, Coburgs, alpacas, &c., are now imitated by mixtures of wool and cotton, although they may originally have been really wool or worsted. These mixtures, when decayed by long wear to the state of rags, undergo a metempsychosis; chemicals are employed to destroy the cotton, and the residue is worked up with a little new wool into cloth. It is within the region of fair probability that some of the wool in a lady's balzarine dress this year, may form part of her husband's overcoat twelve months hence. Cow-hair is used in making mortar, felt, ropes, carpets, and various substitutes for horsehair. And when the ingenuity of man can find no further manufacturing uses for the above varied animal substances, the farmer is always ready to buy them as manure; 2½ pounds of woollen rags are said to contain as much fertilising power as 100 pounds of farm-yard manure.

Turning, next, to the skeleton and the inner portion of animals, the value derived from trifles is not less remarkable. Of bones, the best parts are worked up into handles for knives, &c.; into articles of turnery; and into numerous useful productions. Some portions are used to make bone-black or animal charcoal; others are boiled to extract size for dyers and cloth-finishers; and all the rest are ground up into manure for farmers. The almost incredible sum of £800,000 is said to be paid annually in England for bones. Horns and hoofs are used for so many purposes that it would be scarcely possible to enumerate them; many valuable chemical substances are obtained from these sources. Whalebone cuttings and shavings are used for stuffing cushions, &c., for fire-grate ornaments, and for yielding Prussian blue. Dog-fat is used to prepare kid-gloves at Paris, and is also made to yield an oil used as a cheap—perhaps fraudulent—substitute for cod-liver oil. Wool-scourers' waste, in which tallow or fat of some kind is always an ingredient, is now made to give up the wherewithal for stearine candles. The blood of slaughtered animals is used in sugar-refining, in making animal charcoal, in producing the once-famous Turkey-red dye, and in many other ways. The bile or gall of the ox is used as a detergent for wool or cloth; as a medicine; and by painters for cleaning ivory tablets used in miniatures, for fixing chalk and pencil drawings, and for mixing with certain colours. Fishes' scales are used for bracelets and ornaments, and fishes' eyes for undeveloped buds

in artificial flower-making. Butchers' and knackers' offal is cooked up in such modes as to be acceptable as food to cats and dogs. Bladders and intestines are prepared into the cases for sausages and such like articles of food; into water-tight coverings for jars and apothecaries' vessels; into strings for violins and guitars; and into the beautiful membrane named (somewhat equivocally) 'gold-beaters' skin.' The French buy our old written parchments, and return them to us in the form of delicate kid gloves. All the odds and ends of skin and parchment of every kind are 'grist to the mill' of the glue manufacturer. Calfs feet are boiled down to yield neat's-foot oil for leather-dressing; and sheep's feet to yield trotter-oil, not unknown to our makers of hair-oil. Fish garbage, whether at our fishing-stations or at markets such as Billingsgate, is always saleable as manure. Last autumn, one particular shoal of herrings off Lowestoft was so enormously beyond the wants of herring-eaters, that the fishers sold the fish to the farmers at 4s. 6d. per ton! Many a fine field of hops in Kent has been rendered fertile by a manure of sprats and old woollen rags.—One more example of the utilisation of animal substances we cannot resist the temptation to mention. There are certain small brown domestic annoyances which tidy housewives cannot endure to hear even named, and which have received the masquerading designation of 'B flats.' Now, Australia has the misfortune to be very prolific in these B flats; and an enterprising colonist has devised the means of obtaining a useful brown dye from them. Knowing as we do what kind of red dye is obtainable from the cochineal insect, we have no difficulty in believing this statement concerning another small individual. The colonist will be a real 'blessing to mothers,' and to households in general, if he succeeds in using up this peculiar material.

It would be scarcely possible, even if worth while, to determine whether the animal or the vegetable kingdom furnishes the larger amount of useful refuse; suffice it to say, that the vegetable contributions are almost endless in variety. Let us begin with the fibres, the great material for textile clothing. When the cotton-spinners are engaged in working up the hundreds of millions of pounds of cotton which our Liverpool and Glasgow merchants buy yearly, there are five kinds of waste which become scattered about the mill—'strippings,' 'flyings,' 'droppings,' 'blowings,' and 'sweepings;' all are carefully collected, not only for the sake of health and cleanliness in the work-rooms, but because they have a money value. The 'cotton-waste dealers' will give for the strippings and flyings about one-half or two-thirds the value of new cotton; and for the other three kinds, a price about one-eighth or one-tenth of the original value. It is supposed that there is little less than 50,000 tons of this waste produced in Great Britain annually; it is worked up into coarse sheeting and bed-covers, or is sold to the manufacturers of printing-paper, to be mixed with linen rags. In the United States, the cotton waste is worked up into papier-mâché for tea-trays and other articles. Linen rags, besides their more prominent use in paper-making, are largely made into lint for surgeons during war-time. Coir, the fibrous husk of the cocoa, is employed as a material for matting, sacking, rope, and other articles, especially where a power of resisting the attacks of insects is needed. Moss, from the woods of the Mississippi regions, is extensively used for making the bags or bales in which cotton is shipped; and when this service has been rendered, paper-making affords a further resource. Sea-weed is employed in France for a great variety of purposes: it is made into paper; it is used as a lining material for ceilings and walls, on account of its incombustible

properties and its power of resisting vermin; and it is employed by manufacturing chemists as a substance whence iodine and acetic acid can be obtained.

The minor uses of the numerous other components of the vegetable world are singularly varied. Rape-seed, linseed, and cotton-seed, after the oil has been pressed out of them, present the form of husky cakes, which, both in themselves, and in the portion of oil which they still contain, are valuable as cattle-food, for which they have very fattening qualities. It affords a curious instance of the discreditable adulterating practices of our day, that there are many factories in which the husks and refuse of rice are worked up into a substance called 'shude,' sold in thousands of tons, to adulterate oil-cake, to which it is made to bear a considerable resemblance—wanting, however, in the oleaginous properties of the latter. Grape-husks, when charred, are employed in making the intensely black ink with which bank-notes are printed. The raisin stalks and skins which accumulate on the hands of British wine-makers form the very best filter for the use of vinegar-manufacturers; and hence arises a certain advantage in carrying on both those processes in one establishment, as is done by the celebrated firm of Beaufoy at Vauxhall. Rice-husks, and the delicate pellicle which encloses the grain, are largely employed as a litter for stables, as a substitute for saw-dust, and as a food for live-stock and poultry. The bran or refuse from the grinding and bolting of corn is useful as a food for cattle, as a material in tanning, as a cleanser in calico-printing and tin-plate making, and as a stuffing for cushions and dolls. Brewers' and distillers' grains are much sought after as fattening food for live-stock. The bread-rasplings from rolls and from over-baked loaves are used as a coating for hams, and in some districts by poor persons as a substitute for coffee. In Paris, such of these rasplings as have been carbonised to blackness are pounded, sifted, and sold as tooth-powder. Beet-root fibre, after the root has had the juice pressed from it for sugar-making, is eagerly bought by the continental farmers as a fertiliser; while the skinnings from the boiling of the sugar are added to the food for cattle. This same sort of fibre will work up well with other substances as a material for paper, and for papier-mâché tea-trays, &c. The 'trash' or fibre of the sugar-cane, after the juice is expelled, is used by the West India planters as fuel; although chemists tell them that it still contains a great deal of valuable sugar, which might be more profitably applied. The molasses which are left as a residue in beet-root sugar-making can be distilled to yield a spirit, and then made to yield a useful amount of potash. Tan-pit refuse, a complex mixture with much vegetable and a little animal substance, is employed in hot-houses and forcing-stoves, and also for making a peculiar kind of charcoal. Maize, in America, besides supplying an important article of food for man, is brought into requisition in a great variety of ways: the grain is made to yield a spirit and an oil; the stalk has sugar and molasses extracted from it; the cob is an acceptable food for cattle; and the husk is employed for packing oranges and cigars, for stuffing mattresses, for making paper, and as a cheap substitute for horsehair. The cuttings of cork are used as a piston-packing for steam-engines, as a stuffing for beds and pillows, as a buoyant material for safety-boats and garments, and—when mixed with asphalt—as a road-material for suspension-bridges; the elegant new suspension-bridge at Battersea Park furnishes an example of the last-named kind. Rotten potatoes, damaged grain, and refuse rice, are sources whence excellent starch is obtained. Horse-chestnuts, which used to be valueless, except as an occasional food for sheep, are now ground, mixed with a little carbonate of

soda, to neutralise the bitter principle, washed to whiteness, and employed in making meal, starch, vermicelli, and macaroni. The brick-tea made from the spiked leaves and stalks of the tea-plant, is a cheap and portable substitute for regular tea; but the lie-tea, made from the refuse of the tea-plantations, and from the sweepings of the Hong storehouses at Canton, is too often sold as an unfair adulterant. Acorns are roasted and ground for coffee in France. Malt 'commings,' the refuse of the kiln, is one of the too numerous adulterants of coffee, while as a more honest application, it is a valuable manure. Pea-shells are carried in van-loads from Covent Garden Market to the dairies in the vicinity of the metropolis, as a food for milch-cows; in France, they are made to yield a little spirit by distillation, and are used also in paper-making. Saw-dust and shavings have a multiplicity of useful applications: from mahogany, they are used in smoking fish; from boxwood, in cleaning jewellery; from cedar, in making 'otto of cedar-wood'; from sandal-wood, in filling scent-bags; from deal, in packing bottles, and ice, in stuffing dolls, cleansing metals, and sprinkling floors. Tobacco-ashes, procured by burning damaged tobacco in the custom-house kiln or 'Queen's Tobacco-pipe' at the London Docks, are sold to tooth-powder makers. In Savoy, walnuts are pressed for walnut-oil; and the residue oil-cake is eaten by children and poor persons. Palm-oil, which is shipped to the extent of 50,000 tons annually from the west coast of Africa, for the manufacture of soap and candles, is made from a pellicle which surrounds the nut or kernel: this kernel used to be thrown away as a useless residue; but another kind of oil is now expressed from it. It has been estimated that there must be 10,000,000 bushels of nuts to yield the 50,000 tons of palm-oil; that the kernels from this enormous quantity ought to yield the more delicate oil—something like coconut oil—to the value of £3,000,000 annually; and that there would remain 112,000 tons of oil-cake, worth £500,000 as cattle-food.

Turn we finally to the mineral kingdom, which presents its own peculiar list of 'waste' or refuse now applied to useful purposes. The screenings and siftings at our coal-pits, once allowed to remain valueless, are now become a marketable commodity, either by themselves, or mixed with other substances to form artificial fuel. At the gas-works, after the gas and the coke have been made from coal, there are many residual substances which, in the early history of the manufacture, were regarded as troublesome encumbrances; but now they nearly all become useful. From the liquid left in some of the pipes are manufactured sulphate of ammonia for manure, sal-ammoniac for soldering and for calico-printing, ammonia for dyers, and as one component in orchil and cudbear. A kind of oil useful as manure is obtained from the shale of the coal. Coal-tar (of which 300,000 tons are among the annual residue of our gas-works) is used in the preparation of printers' ink, lamp-black, asphaltic composition for pavements, disinfectants, artificial fuel, and for yielding a magnificent straw-colour dye for silk. There were days when naphtha, now used for artificial illumination, benzole, now used as a lubricator, and paraffine, now used for a variety of purposes, were all thrown away as waste. Ashes and small cinders form a well-known ingredient in bricks; and soot is worth sixpence per bushel as manure, even if chemists make no use of it for the charcoal it contains. Argol, the sediment of wine-casks, is imported to the extent of a thousand tons yearly; when purified into 'cream of tartar,' it is used as a medicine, and also as a mordant by dyers. One thousand tons of broken bottles, instead of being thrown away, are, in London alone, yearly consigned to the glass-furnace, to commence a

new career of usefulness. Horseshoe nails, picked up by the grubbers about the streets, and the scraps of steel from needle-factories, are eagerly bought up by the Birmingham gunmakers, as the best of all materials for the barrels of muskets and rifles. Steel-pen waste is bought back by the Sheffield steel-makers at L.10 per ton; Birmingham brass-filings fetch half the value of new brass; and steel-filings are valuable to chemists and apothecaries. Jewellers' and gold-beaters' sweepings are rated at a very high value; the sweepings of the benches and floors are always preserved for sale; the clothing and aprons have a sufficient number of particles of gold in and about them to give them a marketable value; the older they are, of course, the better. A goldbeater can generally obtain a new waistcoat for an old one; and sometimes a very old waistcoat will be bought by a refiner at a price almost fabulous. In all such cases, everything extraneous is burnt away, leaving precious gold as a residue. Tin-plate cuttings, in hundreds of tons, are awaiting the result of experiments now being made to separate the tin from the iron, and thus render both again serviceable; meanwhile, the scraps are applied to a few useful purposes. The old-iron shops, which are supplied by dustmen, street-grubbers, mud-larks, and other persons, in their turn supply the captains of American ships with battered and broken old kettles, sauce-pans, frying-pans, gridirons, candle-sticks, tea-trays, shovels, boilers, corrugated roofing, &c.; these odds and ends serve as a cheap kind of ballast for ships going away with light cargoes.

Enough. Readers of any experience could easily add to this curious list of proofs that nothing is valueless—that there is good in everything.

MY FIRST BALL.

To most young ladies, their first ball is an event of no ordinary importance: it is the limit between an old life and a new one. With the first ball—the first ball of grown-up people, I mean, for children's parties do not count—there is an end of school-girlhood, and young ladydom begins. Henceforth, the reign of dolls, pinnafors, and skipping-ropes absolutely ceases. The school-mistress or governess resigns, and the chaperone enters upon the scene. Miss is no longer sent to bed regularly at ten o'clock every night: her days are no longer employed in the study of geography, history, and French grammar; she writes no more exercises; and of all the occupations that have hitherto engaged her, one alone remains; she still 'practises,' as it is called, she still, to the distraction of the neighbours, sits strumming upon her piano for a certain number of hours every day; nor is it until a considerable period of time has past over that she is emancipated from that particular serfdom. But in all other respects, her life has changed. Of course, then, the young lady looks forward to her first ball with no small amount of flutter and pleasing anxiety. She wonders how she will like it, what sort of partners she will get, how often she will be asked to dance, and whether she is to be allowed to polk and waltz, or not. Long and serious are the reflections upon the great question of dress; ceaseless is the shopping, and innumerable are the messages to and from the milliner. The female part of the young lady's family are in their glory. Mamma looks back a long way through the bygone years, thinks complacently of her own entry into society, and lives the past over again in her daughter. Papa, who is not at all romantic, but, on the contrary, rather matter of fact, looks upon the whole proceeding as a mere excuse for making pecuniary demands upon him, and is somewhat inclined to grumble beforehand at the milliner's bill. The great evening at last

arrives. Miss is duly arrayed in her new ball attire; the servants come up stairs in a body to admire her before she sets out, and at last she drives off, full of expectation, to make her entrance into the world.

But leaving this young lady to begin the series of triumphs which, I hope, awaits her, I shall come at once to my own experiences. I ought to be ashamed of the confession, perhaps, which possibly would come more fitly from one of the gentler sex; but, nevertheless, I must honestly avow that I, too, look back upon my first ball as on one of the events of my life. I never was fond of what is called Society. At one period of my life, indeed, and more especially at that of which I am now speaking, some short time after I had ceased to be a school-boy, this dislike amounted almost to a disease. I positively shuddered at the notion of going into and forming a part of any large assembly. The hospitable invitation which first informed me that Mrs A. requested the pleasure of my company, filled me with anything but delight, although, under the strong pressure that was brought to bear upon me, I hypocritically declared, in my neatest handwriting, that Mr B. had great pleasure in accepting Mrs A.'s invitation. I had struggled against this, I had wished to send an apology, I was resolved to be unwell; but those who had a right to guide me were very properly determined that there should be no apology, that I should be in rude health, and that I should go to Mrs A.'s party. The flutter I was in was fully equal to that of any young lady such as I have spoken of; there was this difference, however, that hers is a flutter of impatience and delight, mine was one of dislike and fear. Day after day went on, much too fast to please me; and far sooner than I liked, the dreaded evening came. I dressed in a sulk, I oiled my hair in a passion, and put on my dress-coat in a fury. No fortunate accident happened to my evening attire, and at the proper moment, I was perfectly ready to step into the vehicle that was to convey me to what every one but myself considered a scene of pleasure. I was, however, conducted in perfect safety to Mrs A.'s door. My driver knocked, as the custom is upon such occasions, thunderingly, although the hall-door had only just closed upon some prior arrival as we drove up. I left my cab, and walked into the hall. I gave up my hat unresistingly, and immediately lost the pasteboard ticket which was given me in exchange for it. Of course, I would have tea or coffee; of course, I would have or do anything that would delay my entry into the room upstairs. But of what avail was taking tea or coffee? I had imagined that the room in which those stimulants were being served out would be perfectly empty, but for the one or two servants engaged in performing that duty, and I therefore counted on having five minutes of solitude and tranquillity, during which I might collect my scattered senses before facing the enemy. But taking tea or coffee were six young ladies and three young gentlemen, forming two or three different little parties, who had come a short time before me, and were chatting and laughing with each other in a low tone of voice. To find so many persons where I had expected to find no one at all, did not add to my comfort, and leaving the room as fast as I had entered it, I bravely began to ascend the stairs, and, hardly knowing what I did, mechanically gave my name to the servant who stood at the drawing-room door, as soon as he asked for it. For a moment, I stood stupidly expecting what would come next, when the servant, who I must have imagined had asked for my name merely to gratify some private curiosity of his own, horrified me by loudly proclaiming it, and immediately standing aside, made way for me to pass into the room. I walked in, literally not knowing whether I stood upon my head or my

heels, and felt, rather than heard or saw, that a lady was bidding me welcome. Then I recollected who the lady was, and as I had the pleasure of being pretty intimately acquainted with her, I felt a little relieved, and was able to stammer out some commonplace remark. If I could have monopolised my hostess, all would have been well for a while at least, but scarcely had I begun to speak to her, when the voice of the servant again resounded. Mr Blank and the Misses Blank were announced as sonorous as I myself had been, and the lady of the house of course stepped forward to receive her new guests. What on earth was I to do with myself now? Look where I would, I saw no friend or acquaintance. Dresses, white, blue, and pink, were ranged along the walls; that they were dresses, I knew; that in those dresses there were human beings, it would have been impossible for me at the moment either to assert or to deny. There was not even a vacant corner to which I might retire and conceal myself. There I stood, like the fool in the middle at the children's game of 'Four Corners,' afraid either to advance or to retreat, and of course imagining, as people will do under such circumstances, that every one was criticising each movement I made. At last, as little by little my senses came back to me, I espied standing at the furthest end of the room two young gentlemen, one of whom was about my own age, and the other some two or three years older. The two were chatting very unconcernedly, and recognising an acquaintance in the younger of them, I took my courage, as the French say, in my two hands, and advanced across the room to join him. He received me cavalierly enough, and desecrating the traces of my trouble in my manner, began indelicately to 'chaff' me upon my want of experience of the world. He was himself, if anything, younger than I; we had long been together at the same school, where I had always been his superior alike in the class-room and in the play-ground. Yet here he was on his proper ground: he had been out at half-a-dozen balls before that which I am describing, had picked up at them no small amount of assurance, and seemed now to be upon perfectly good terms with himself. Indeed, he appeared to consider himself a finished man of the world, and looking upon me as a mere raw novice, treated me with a mixture of pleasant banter and condescending patronage.

Anywhere else, I should have resented this behaviour on this young gentleman's part, but I was now only too glad to bear with anything, that I might have some one that I knew to speak with. But even the dreary comfort of being the butt of my friend's sarcasms did not last long; he speedily recognised at the other end of the room a young lady, who, as he hurriedly explained, was 'a regular brick of a girl,' walking with a coolness which I envied, but could not have imitated for worlds, across the room, was soon deep in conversation with the fair one that he had so strikingly eulogised. Thus I was again flung on my own resources. What an interest I suddenly took in some knick-knacks that stood upon the chimney-piece. How critically I examined the one or two statuettes, which, with a couple of small pictures, obtained, I believe, by some scientific process, now formed the objects of my admiration for some minutes. Even to this moment, they are still firmly printed on my memory; and when I close my eyes, I can distinctly recall, first a small bust of Lord Brougham, secondly, a Turk in alabaster, and thirdly, two views of two distinct happy valleys, each with a high mountain in the background, a river meandering gently through the centre of the picture, and of course, in the foreground, the orthodox number of very curious trees, and extraordinary shepherds and shepherdesses. My study

of these works of art was, however, soon interrupted: the musicians hired for the evening began to prelude upon their instruments. A movement of some half-dozen couples took place, from the apartment in which the company had assembled, into a large uncarpeted back-room, divided from the other by folding-doors, which lay wide open. Young gentlemen were seen bowing to young ladies, who stood up, took the arms of the young gentlemen, and then proceeded into the back-room. Our hostess, who had been fidgeting about, speaking quietly to eligible youth, who, on being addressed by her, either went off and secured partners for themselves, or were led away by her, and forthwith introduced, now came up to me, and, in the blandest tones, asked if she might introduce me to a partner for the first set of quadrilles. I was about to beg to be excused; but I felt that my doing so would be of no use; besides, a desperate feeling came over me, that as I was at the ball, I might as well yield to my fate, and endure my martyrdom to the uttermost. Accordingly, I submitted, I cannot say with a very good grace, and followed my hostess, who led me up to a young lady in blue; whether handsome or not, clever-looking or not, good-natured looking or not, I had not my wits sufficiently about me to distinguish. The lady of the house then uttered some words—I believe my name and that of the young lady in blue—which, however, I did not catch; I muttered something about 'pleasure' and 'set of quadrilles;' the young lady in blue stood up and took my arm; and by some sort of instinct, rather than by any knowledge of what was to be done, I took myself off along with my partner into the back-room. My friend, who had been kind enough to patronise me at an earlier period of the evening, now rendered me a service, and spared me some trouble, by asking me to be his *vis-à-vis*. The necessity of finding some couple opposite whom to dance had never struck me, and had it not been for this young gentleman, I should have signalled myself more than I did. We took our places, and the dance began. We were at the side, so that while the upper and lower ends were going through the figure, there was for us some leisure for conversation. But, in the name of wonder, what was I to talk about? I speculated on the probability of my partner liking books, and was upon the point of opening a literary conversation with her, when I thought that perhaps she would not be pleased at being taken for a 'blue.' Then I thought that possibly she might be a frequenter of theatres and concerts, and that these would be capital subjects to talk about; but just as I was going to inquire her opinion of the company that had been for the last month performing in our city, I thought I saw some traces of the precisian in her countenance, and jumped to the conclusion that she would be insulted at even the insinuation that she was a playgoer; so on this subject also I held my peace. In this way, half-a-dozen subjects of conversation came into my mind, and were successively dismissed; and thus it came to pass, that when it came to our turn to dance, I had not exchanged a single word with my partner. When the second quadrille began, I thought that, after all, this would never do, and that say something I must, if only for the sake of adding to the buzz that was going on all around; and at last I found a topic, easy to dilate upon, if neither novel, deep, nor perhaps exceedingly interesting. And here, in the name of all shy people, past, present, and to come—in the name of all not blessed with any lively wit or exuberant fancy, do I tender a tribute of heartfelt gratitude to the man, whoever he was, who first invented the weather. The man who first made the sagacious observation, 'What a beautiful day we have had!' and who first speculated on the probability of there being rain to-morrow, was a conversational Prometheus.

He gave mankind just such a useful element, conversationally, as that bestowed by the other was physically. Where would the arts and sciences and all the necessities of life be, but for fire, and where would conversation with very many people be, but for the weather? I therefore dashed boldly into this interesting topic. First, I observed that the room we were in was very warm; then I stated, and was happy to find that the young lady in blue concurred with me, that the day had been rather cold. I reviewed the varying state of the atmosphere for the past year; I dilated upon the horrors of rain and fog, the comparative pleasure of frost, and the delights of sunshine and blue skies. I experienced a real happiness in finding that my views and those of my fair partner, upon the subject of the east wind, did not differ in any essential particular. In such engaging discourse did I get through the rest of this, my first set of quadrilles. I cannot say that the young lady in blue seemed to take that interest in the conversation which she ought to have done; neither did she help me very much: her part in the discourse was chiefly confined to an occasional 'Oh!' or 'Ah!' or 'Yes,' or 'Indeed.' To be sure, these few words were very expressive, and were uttered in an exceedingly sweet, low tone of voice; but, on the whole, I preserve to this hour an uneasy feeling that she looked upon me as rather stupid than otherwise, and that our set of quadrilles was to her, as it was to me, something of the nature of an inflection.

The dance over, I conducted the fair one in solemn silence round and round the room in which we were, and finally, at her request, went to look for mamma, whom we found with several other elderly ladies seated in a corner of the front room, and with whom, having made a low bow, I left her, and departed. I managed to shirk some of the dances which succeeded, and for a while found some amusement in quietly observing the various little scenes that were taking place about me; but too soon Destiny, in the shape of the lady of the house, again confronted me, and once more insisted upon being allowed to find me a partner for the next quadrille. I assented, was duly introduced, and with my new partner, went to take my place. Then, to my horror, I found that the quadrilles which were about to commence were not the ordinary ones, but of the complicated species known as the Lancers. Why the Lancers are ever danced, I do not clearly understand, for it is my firm belief that the mysteries of their figures are perfectly known to few, and that most persons have only a very superficial acquaintance with them. With a clear head, a strong memory, and undivided attention, it is possible, doubtless, for the general run of ball-goers to get safely through them; but for my own part, I can truly say that, though it is a long time since I read a Greek play, or solved a proposition in Euclid, I nevertheless would rather at this moment undertake to pick my way through a chorus of *Æschylus*, or to achieve the passage of the *Asses' Bridge*, than attempt to thread the labyrinthine windings of the Lancers.

The reader may then judge of my horror when I discovered my position; any little presence of mind that I had hitherto possessed, I now completely lost. I went blindly at it, with a savage determination to do as best I could. What I did ever know of the figures, I at once forgot. I could not speak even of the weather; all my attention, such as it was, was given to observing those who danced before me, and I floundered through after a most sorry fashion. A vague confusion took the place of any regular figure. Chaos was come again. I not only was out myself, but I threw every one else out. The dance, thanks to my exertions, at one time assumed the appearance of an Irish jig, at another, that of a

Scotch reel, while a certain resemblance to Sir Roger de Coverley pervaded the whole. The lookers-on seemed to consider it capital fun, but, for my own part, I longed for the floor to open under me, that I might fall, safely or not, into the hall, and thence escape in quiet. I had a wild notion of abandoning the quadrille, my partner, and the room all at once, and rushing away to any place where I should never again see the face of any one of those present. I was covered with confusion; I blushed most becomingly; and a cold perspiration broke out all over me. But all human sufferings must come to an end, and so, accordingly, did this set of the Lancers; it was over at last. I led my partner to her chaperone, and instantly, without waiting even to bid farewell to my hostess, descended to the cloak-room, found my hat, after considerable difficulty, and without more ado, left the house. I flew rather than walked home. It was raining in torrents, but I did not care. I passed two or three cab-stands, but in spite of the invitations of the drivers, I pressed on, on foot. I rather liked the rain, in fact. When I reached home, I spoke no word to those who received me; account of my evening's pleasure I paused not to give; but stalked off moodily and silently to bed, where I soon fell into a feverish sleep, varied by strange dreams, in which I saw a huge barometer dancing the Lancers with a lady in blue; while I myself stood by to guide the couple through the various figures, which, however, I invariably forgot as fast as it became necessary to recollect them. And thus ended my first ball.

THE IDYLLS OF THE KING.

WHATSOEVER excuses may be made for the shortcomings of our present Laureate, that of hurry—'raw Haste, half-sister to Delay'—will certainly not hold good. No cunning artificer in mosaic of most precious stones was ever more patient or more painstaking than he; no work was ever turned out more flawless, to the utmost ability of the workman, than his; the long delay and labour of the File is never spared; and if he does not keep his verses in his desk for the entire period recommended by the Latin poet, he at least retains them long enough to create a hunger for them in the hearts of men.

Alfred Tennyson is not in any sense a popular poet. His admirers, although numerous, and always increasing, are among 'the upper ten thousand' only. His somewhat severe classicism; a certain elegant haughtiness which pervades almost all his writings; the subtlety of a mind too 'skilled to track Suggestion to her inmost lair;' his conservatism; and his total lack of humour, will for long, and perhaps for ever, prevent him from becoming a poet of the People. Whenever he has attempted to grapple with affairs of the day—with any *publica materies*—as in *Maud*, they feel that it would have been better done by a manner man. Among the intellectual classes, on the other hand—people of fashion restricting their admiration, for obvious reasons, to that class of his poems which is not the highest—there has never been poet so hailed as Alfred Tennyson. His name is perhaps the only one in modern literature which is received at both the fastidious English universities with fitting honour. The man who should speak of him disrespectfully in Combination or Common Room would be more likely to get a personal quarrel on his hands than by bronchial any theological or political heterodoxy. The hard-worked curate in his lonely lodgings, the would-be hard-worked barrister in his briefless chambers, welcome the rare utterances of the Laureate with an affectionate admiration that they accord to no other living writer; while even the bowless *Saturday Reviewer* grows genial

at the sight of each fresh green volume, and turns to his *English Synonyms* for words of commendation and respect.

These *Idylls of the King* have been longer even than usual in making their wished-for appearance. Pleasant rumours of them, like sounds of music while it is yet a great way off, have reached us from time to time; odours from the four sweet flowers of which this nosegay is composed have been imparted to us, now and again, by the favoured few; but still the workman was dissatisfied, and would not part with that he had in hand. At last we have it. The *Idylls*—simple tales of love and war—are thus named; Enid, Vivien, Elaine, and Guinevere. The first and best is founded upon the old and piteous story of a true knight—the brave Geraint—mistrusting his true wife Enid. As the stupid, good, strong man is lying on a summer morn in bed, the poet takes that opportunity of making this admirable anatomical sketch of him:

He, moving, cast the coverlet aside,
And bared the knotted column of his throat,
The massive square of his heroic breast,
And arms on which the standing muscle sloped,
As slopes a wild brook o'er a little stone,
Running too vehemently to break upon it;

while at the same time Enid makes a soliloquy. Not being so fast asleep as he seems, he overhears her, and mistranslates her words to mean that down in his dreary Devonshire (of which he is a tributary Prince), she weeps for some gay knight in Arthur's Halls. At once he grows oblivious of his former faith in her; forgetful of that pure, fair Enid, Yniol's daughter, whose sweet voice touched him so when first he heard it—

For as the sweet voice of a bird,
Heard by the lander in a lonely isle,
Moves him to think what kind of bird it is
That sings so delicately clear, and make
Conjecture of the plumage and the form;
So the sweet voice of Enid moved Geraint;
And made him like a man abroad at morn
When first the liquid note beloved of men
Comes flying over many a windy wave
To Britain, and in April suddenly
Breaks from a coppice gemmed with green and red,
And he suspends his converse with a friend,
Or it may be the labour of his hands,
To think or say: 'There is the nightingale.'

He bids her dress in a mean garment, and mount her palfrey, and ride with him forth into the wilderness. His people had accused him of uxoriousness and sloth, as though his spurs were yet to win; and he is about to disprove that scandal with a vengeance. He will not allow poor Enid even to speak with him, and roundly rates her, when, as she leads the way, she warns him of an ambush of three bandits, whom he thus disposes of:

Then Enid waited pale and sorrowful,
And down upon him bare the bandit three.
And at the midmost charging, Prince Geraint
Drove the long spear a cubit through his breast
And out beyond; and then against his brace
Of comrades, each of whom had broken on him
A lance that splintered like an icicle,
Swung from his brand a windy buffet out
Once, twice, to right, to left, and stunned the twain
Or slew them, and dismounting like a man
That skins the wild beast after slaying him,
Stript from the three dead wolves of woman born
The three gay suits of armour which they wore,
And let the bodies lie, but bound the suits
Of armour on their horses, each on each,
And tied the bridle-reins of all the three
Together, and said to her: 'Drive them on
Before you;' and she drove them through the waste.

In a second encounter of the like kind he is equally successful, but his lance

A little in the late encounter strained,
Struck through the bulky bandit's corslet home,
And then brake short, and down his enemy rolled,
And there lay still; as he that tells the tale,
Saw once a great piece of a promontory
That had a sapling growing on it, slip
From the long shore-cliffs windy walls to the beach,
And there lie still, and yet the sapling grew;
So lay the man transfixt.

Which metaphor has surely something about it of that beautiful Undercliff close by the Poet's home in the Fair Island!

After a narrow escape from death or captivity in the territory of the dissolute young Earl Limours, an old admirer of Enid's, the still unreconciled pair are pursued by that false knight and his myrmidons.

But while the sun yet beat a dewy blade,
The sound of many a heavily galloping hoof
Smote on her ear, and turning round she saw
Dust, and the points of lances bicker in it.
Then not to disobey her lord's behest,
And yet to give him warning, for he rode
As if he heard her not, moving back she held
Her finger up, and pointed to the dust.
At which the warrior in his obstinacy,
Because she kept the letter of his word,
Was in a manner pleased, and turning, stood.
And in the moment after, wild Limours,
Borne on a black horse, like a thunder-cloud
Whose skirts are loosened by the breaking storm,
Half ridden off with by the thing he rode,
And all in passion uttering a dry shriek,
Dashed on Geraint, who closed with him, and bore
Down by the length of lance and arm beyond
The crupper, and so left him stunned or dead,
And overthrew the next that followed him,
And blindly rushed on all the rout behind.
But at the flash and motion of the man
They vanished panic-stricken, like a shoal
Of darting fish, that on a summer morn
Adown the crystal dykes at Camelot
Come slipping o'er their shadows on the sand,
But if a man who stands upon the brink
But lift a shining hand against the sun,
There is not left the twinkle of a fin
Betwixt the cressy islets white in flower;
So, scared but at the motion of the man,
Fled all the boon-companions of the earl,
And left him lying in the public way;
So vanish friendships only made in wine.

In this combat, however, the doughty Geraint is wounded near to death, and falling off his horse by the wayside, is tended by his broken-hearted Enid, till another earl, one 'Doorm, whom his shaking vassals called the Bull,' rides by, who, for her sake, because her face was comely, bids his retainers take to his own hall the wounded knight. Thither, in the following afternoon, returned the earl, to feast somewhat as the Wild Boar of Ardennes feasted in the Bishop's palace at Liege;

His lusty spearmen followed him with noise;
Each hurling down a heap of things that rang
Against the pavement, cast his lance aside,
And doffed his helm; and then there flattered in,
Half-bold, half-frighted, with dilated eyes,
A tribe of women, dressed in many hues,
And mingled with the spearmen: and Earl Doorm
Struck with a knife's haft hard against the board,
And called for flesh and wine to feed his spears.
And men brought in whole hogs and quarter beeves,
And all the hall was dim with steam of flesh:
And none spake word, but all sat down at once,
And ate with tumult in the naked hall,
Feeding like horses when you hear them feed.

The earl, with various indignities, endeavours to make Enid eat and drink, be merry, and put on fine clothes to please him; but she, pointing to her prostrate husband, tells him,

'I have griefs enough:
Pray you, be gentle; pray you, let me be:
I never loved, can never love but him:
Yea, God, I pray you of your gentleness,
He being as he is, to let me be!'

Then strode the brute earl up and down his hall,
And took his russet beard between his teeth;
Last, coming up quite close, and in his mood
Crying: 'I count it of no more avail,
Dame, to be gentle than ungentle with you;
Take my salute,' unknighly, with flat hand,
However lightly, smote her on the cheek.

Then Enid, in her utter helplessness,
And since she thought, 'he had not dared to do it,
Except he surely knew my lord was dead,'
Sent forth a sudden sharp and bitter cry,
As of a wild thing taken in the trap,
Which sees the trapper coming through the wood.

This heard Geraint, and grasping at his sword,
(It lay beside him in the hollow shield),
Made but a single bound, and with a sweep of it
Shore through the swarthy neck, and like a ball,
The russet-bearded head rolled on the floor.

Thus having tried his wife by many a trial, and never finding her aught but true and loyal in each, the brave Geraint acknowledges his suspicions to be false, and declares that henceforward he will rather die than doubt.

This simple framework of a simple tale, although abounding everywhere with charming fancies, is by no means too luxuriantly laden with them. Like a noble structure exquisitely carved, the poem itself is always felt to be superior to its ornaments. The lines are sometimes nervous, as the knightly limbs of those they sing, and now and then a word falls like a blow; while, despite the somewhat labyrinthine and discursive passages, we never once lose the golden thread of the tale, from first to last. The story would be a good and interesting one even though it had been written in prose.

From Elaine, the second best Idyll, in our judgment, we call a bloody image, worthy of Solferino:

I saw him stand
High on a heap of slain, from spur to plume
Red as the rising sun with heathen blood.

And from the same poem, a description of jealousy at table, which is very terrible. There is a rumour in the court that Lancelot loves another than the queen:

Till even the knights at banquet twice or thrice
Forgot to drink to Lancelot and the queen,
And pledging Lancelot and the lily maid
Smiled at each other, while the queen who sat
With lips severely placid, felt the knot
Climb in her throat, and with her feet unseen
Crushed the wild passion out against the floor
Beneath the banquet, where the meats became
As wormwood, and she hated all who pledged!

There is, it must be confessed, a cold idealism about the doings of King Arthur and his knights, which perhaps no genius could realise for us. A light that never was on sea or shore shines on that dreamy past, and gives a weird complexion to every face. Mr Tennyson, perhaps from long application to the subject, seems to have acclimatised himself, and to feel at home in that strange atmosphere; he speaks cursorily, and in the most natural manner in the world of Tristram and Isolde, of Camelot and of Usk, and with 'the Dragon of the great Pendragonship' is quite on easy terms. This is far from being the case with us, his readers; therefore, it is the greater glory to him

when he touches our human hearts with the sorrows of 'the lily maid of Astolat,' whom meek Sir Percivale and pure Sir Galahad upbore when dead; or makes our cheek flame at the doings of Earl Doorm; or compels us to sympathise so deeply with 'the blameless king' when his Guinevere has fled the court, having wronged him with his dearest knight, Sir Lancelot, and in the holy house at Almesbury awaits her sentence from his faithful lips.

Scarcely, in all the range of English poetry, do we know anything grander than that great forgiveness and solemn farewell. 'This life of mine,' he says,

'I guard as God's high gift from scathe and wrong,
Not greatly care to lose; but rather think
How sad it were for Arthur, should he live,
To sit once more within his lonely hall,
And miss the wonted number of my knights,
And miss to hear high talk of noble deeds,
As in the golden days before thy sin.
For which of us, who might be left, could speak
Of the pure heart, nor seem to glance at thee?
And in thy bowers of Camelot or of Usk
Thy shadow still would glide from room to room,
And I should evermore be vexed with thee
In hanging robe or vacant ornament,
Or ghostly footfall echoing on the stair.
For think not, though thou wouldst not love thy lord,
Thy lord has wholly lost his love for thee.
I am not made of so slight elements.
Yet must I leave thee, woman, to thy shame.
I hold that man the worst of public foes
Who either for his own or children's sake,
To save his blood from scandal, lets the wife
Whom he knows false, abide and rule the house;
For being through his cowardice allowed
Her station, taken everywhere for pure,
She, like a new disease, unknown to men,
Creeps, no precaution used, among the crowd,
Makes wicked lightnings of her eyes, and saps
The fealty of our friends, and stirs the pulse
With devil's leaps, and poisons half the young.
Worst of the worst were that man he that reigns!
Better the king's waste hearth and aching heart
Than thou re-seated in thy place of light,
The mockery of my people, and their bane.'

He paused, and in the pause she crept an inch
Nearer, and laid her hands about his feet.
Far off, a solitary trumpet blew.
Then waiting by the doors the war-horse neighed,
As at a friend's voice, and he spake again.

'Yet think not that I come to urge thy crimes;
I did not come to curse thee, Guinevere,
I, whose vast pity almost makes me die
To see thee, laying there thy golden head,
My pride in happier summers, at my feet.
The wrath which forced my thoughts on that fierce law,
The doom of treason and the flaming death,
(When first I learnt thee hidden here) is past.
The pang—which while I weighed thy heart with one
Too wholly true to dream untruth in thee,
Made my tears burn—is also past, in part.
And all is past, the sin is sinned, and I,
Lo! I forgive thee, as Eternal God
Forgives: do thou for thine own soul the rest.
But how to take last leave of all I loved?
O golden hair, with which I used to play
Not knowing! O imperial-moulded form,
And beauty, such as never woman wore,
Until it came a kingdom's curse with thee—
I cannot touch thy lips, they are not mine,
But Lancelot's: nay, they never were the king's.
I cannot take thy hand; that too is flesh,
And in the flesh thou hast sinned; and mine own flesh,
Here looking down on thine polluted, cries
"I loathe thee:" yet not less, O Guinevere,
For I was ever virgin save for thee,
My love through flesh hath wrought into my life

So far, that my doom is, I love thee still.
 Perchance, and so thou purify thy soul,
 And so thou lean on our fair father Christ,
 Hereafter in that world where all are pure
 We two may meet before high God, and thou
 Wilt spring to me, and claim me thine, and know
 I am thine husband—not a smaller soul,
 Nor Lancelot, nor another. Leave me that,
 I charge thee, my last hope. Now must I hence.
 Through the thick night I hear the trumpet blow;
 They summon me their king to lead mine hosts
 Far down to that great battle in the west,
 Where I must strike against my sister's son,
 Leagued with the lords of the White Horse, and
 knights
 Once mine, and strike him dead, and meet myself
 Death, or I know not what mysterious doom.
 And thou remaining here will learn the event;
 But hither shall I never come again,
 Never lie by thy side, see thee no more.
 Farewell !'

And while she grovelled at his feet,
 She felt the king's breath wander o'er her neck,
 And, in the darkness o'er her fallen head,
 Perceived the waving of his hands that blest.

That all good will be spoken of these Idylls, we do not doubt. The worst that shall be said of them by us, is, that they contain nothing equal to the poet's old *Morte d'Arthur*; just as we might say, half peevishly, when looking on four new columns of richest stone, flawless from base to capital, that they were well enough, but nothing to the grand old fragment lying yonder, carved by the same great sculptor in his youth.

ULTIMA THULE.

IN THREE CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER II.

CONSIDERING the nature of their position, it is scarcely surprising that the boats and boatmen of these islands are without a rival. The former—those of them that are usually employed in fishing—eighteen feet in keel, six feet in beam, manned by six rowers, and fitted with a mighty square sail, shew at once, by the elegance and narrowness of their build, their connection with brave old Norway. In boats like these, which skim along the tops of the waves like the wing of the stormy petrel, that is still their frequent companion, their crews could ravage a village, and be at sea again, before the broader and clumsier craft of the southland fisherman could be well in the water. However improved in occupation their descendants are, in dress and appearance they do not belie their origin. Pliant shoes or *ricelins* of seal or of calf skin, with the hair left on, and neatly fastened with the sinews of those animals, adorn and protect the feet. When the wearer has attained to the dignity of a householder—and there are few who have not—a long worsted cap of many colours and fantastic pattern depends gracefully from his head; while the oar, working not in thole-pins, but a rope-noose, which gives a freedom to its motion unknown elsewhere, is plied with the unrivalled dexterity of men whose chosen home is the ocean. Should its billows rise, he instantly dons a more picturesque and peculiar garb. Over the *ricelins* are drawn huge boots; leathern breeches encase the limbs; a leathern cuirass, the chest and arms; a leathern slouched cap, with huge ear-lappets, the head. With an eye glancing incessantly from sky to sail, from sail to sea; an arm that gives stroke just where it will most avail, and a hand at the helm that will dodge the most threatening wave that ever rolled, your Shetland boatman is one in whose company you may sink the highest

mountain of Foula, and feel, though forty miles from the shore, and with a current of nine knots an hour hurrying you onward, perfectly secure. It is the one dark spot in his position that his courage and skill are so ill repaid. The proprietors of the soil, feeling little inclination to reside on their barren and treeless shores, make over its management to middle-men, whose sole object is money. The fisherman is their slave. They let him his cottage and little croft, but as a yearly tenant, who may be ejected to homeless wretchedness whenever the conditions of lease are violated, which are such, at the same time, as hopelessly obstruct his elevation above a manhood of poverty and an old age of pauperism. To the middle-man he must sell his fish; from the middle-man he must buy his goods. The middle-man, being the owner of his lines and boat, has him continually in his debt; and should his brave son take a fancy to a life of enterprise in her Majesty's navy, or a merchantman, the middle-man is too prudent to forbid him, but significantly intimates that he has another tenant in view for his father's cottage, and the brave lad remains to fish for him, and starve by him, as before. This system, however mercifully carried on, is, in its very nature, one that is degrading and debasing to all concerned; and not less so, indeed, than that which was long the ruin and disgrace of Ireland. It cannot instantly be changed with success. The spirit of enterprise in the tenant has been chilled by its long continuance; the temptation to dispose of his fish by stealth and at a better market has fostered cunning and deceit in his nature; while his ignorance of the value of money—for the fish are paid for in kind only, on the truck system, with every article of food and clothing rated at the highest price, and debased to the lowest quality—conspires to give an indolence and want of enterprise to his character, which render the efforts of a generous landlord to improve his condition by more generous arrangements, at first, extremely discouraging. Such efforts, rare as they have been, are not, however, unknown; and when the light and indignation of the public eye falls sooner or later on those who overlook the duties of property, the great landowners of Shetland will yearly be seen residing for a few months on their bleak domains, bringing the reign of the middle-men to a close; offering leases to their tenantry, and conquering that unwillingness to be bound by them which cunning and ignorance have fostered, by kindly representations such as their simple natures can appreciate; giving them free permission to sell in the dearest and buy in the cheapest market they can find; and leaving, as the natural and inevitable reward of such a course, a name never to be mentioned but with gratitude.

The Shetland fisherman is an eminently superstitious being. Should you meet him in the morning, as, encased in his leathern armour, he is lazily striding to the sea, and inquire in which direction he intends going this breezy day, his luck is felt to be lost by your curiosity, and with angry look and muttered *blessing*, he wends him back to his cottage. Ask him how many ponies or sheep he has, and he feels that to mention the exact number would bring the plague against pride upon them all; and it is from this feeling, we imagine, of the danger connected with the mention of numbers, that arithmetic is a branch of learning in which the teachers can hardly bring their female pupils to be instructed. Embark with Magnus in his boat, and you find that he will hardly call any object by its right name: everything suffers a sea-change; if you speak of the cat, or the minister, ten to one but he puts you ashore again: whenever he mentions the latter at sea, he is the 'upstander.' He will spin you long yarns (but more willingly when ashore than afloat) of the *trous* or sea-demons

that break his nets; of Nicker their leader (Old Nick?), who appears to the herd-boy on the moor as a saddled pony, and vanishes in a flash of fire; of a man in black, who accosts the solitary traveller, and leaves him a mangled corpse, making it the extreme of folly ever, even in daylight, to travel alone, and a positive tempting of Providence to walk without company after dusk; of seal-skins found on the shore, which are the cast-off dress of mermaids, who, until they regain them, must walk in human form; and who, from having sometimes lost them irrecoverably, have even intermarried with the sons of men, and left fair children behind them, some of whom your informer's uncle or grandfather, it may be, has often sailed with, and found them little different from others, save that they were slightly web-fingered, and that their eyes were more green than usual. They will tell you of elf-shot cattle, and children whose hearts have been stolen, and who pine away, until molten lead poured into a bowl of water, over which the proper incantation has been sung, assumes the form of the missing organ, and is a sign that the malignant fairies have been compelled to restore it to its owner, who is from that hour to be florid and well again. Offerings are still made at our Lady's ruined chapel at Weisdale of pieces of money, in order that the unappropriated maiden may find a lover; nor is it long since an elder of the kirk-session was authorised by a minute of that body to institute annually a search for these offerings, and distribute them to the parish poor. Still at St Ninian's Isle are candles burned at his fallen shrine, and models of limbs and hearts dug up, restored by his influence to a state of health; firmly as ever is it believed that the scrofula, to which their fishy and unvaried diet renders them peculiarly subject, would rapidly vanish if the finger of her gracious Majesty condescended to touch its victims; nay, such virtue has even the effigies of royalty, that some crown and half-crown pieces of Charles I. are preserved in the islands as a sacred inheritance, while there are few localities in which a living witness is not found of the reality of 'the cure by the coin.' When worthy and reverend Mr Brand and his seven co-presbyters visited Shetland in 1700, as a deputation from the General Assembly, to 'eradicate the relics of paganism and idolatry, and abolish night-walkings in procession round ruined chapels, and the uncleanness they occasioned,' runic knots could be cast which had power to bring the eagle from the sky; and mermaids were so commonly vouched for, that the worthy man was brought himself to believe in their existence—'it being told him by a worthy gentleman of good credit that a man fishing one day, and finding something unusually heavy on his line, discovered on drawing it that he had hooked a woman through the lips, with full-formed breasts and long hair; and that on his companion, by a stroke of his knife, at once severing the line, and wounding her in the neck, she fell back into the sea, with the word, "Alas!" while her murderer was haunted ever after by a spirit, who addressed him night and day with the words: "Would you dare to do that, who killed the woman?" till he pined and died.'

When he visited Shetland, the embers were scarcely extinguished of the fire at which a 'varlet named Luggie' was burned for witchcraft, and for drawing ready cooked fish from a hole in a green hillock—still called Luggie's Knowe—that could have been boiled nowhere but in Satan's caldron. What wonder how deeply the superstitious feeling is implanted in a country so wild and lonely; with its short winter-day, and long night of seven months, made magnificent by the roar and the foam of the waves below, and the play of the aurora borealis, of every form and

hue, in the sky above! Walking with a friend one bright summer-day over a lonely moor, with a couple of stout boatmen carrying our wallets, there was heard from time to time a long wail, as of a person in deadly pain, that effectually terrified Swein and Olla, and in no small degree puzzled ourselves. Stopping, the cry stopped; proceeding, it awoke again in notes of unutterable woe. Swein was expecting to become a father. Poor Britta, twenty miles off in Papa Stour, was taken in his absence with her pains, and, poor fellow, these cries, he seemed to feel—and his honest face became pale and bedewed with sweat-drops at the thought—were her last farewell to him, who should never see her but in her shroud. 'No, no, Swein; what have you in your hand, man?' 'As I live by sillocks, the noise is coming from the hole in this blown egg! Who would have thought that a dirty lunc, even if it had struck me with its wing across the eyes, could have made such a fool of me?' This resolution of the mystery was found correct. Swein had been intrusted with the rare and beautiful egg of the bold bird he named, taken from the cliffs of Foula, and presenting the hole in its side to the action of the air as he walked, it had occasioned the sound, and given him the fright in question; but with no unlucky consequences, for Swein met us a few days afterwards a happy father, while 'Britta was as well as could be expected.'

There are two tenants of the open pastures and green holms of Shetland, of whom so much has been heard as to make them, to the curious stranger, a subject of first inquiry—the sheep and the ponies. Curious-looking creatures they both are, and, next to their bounteous sea, a main source of maintenance to the natives, rich and poor. The common lands are extensive, and preserved with jealous care in their undiminished integrity by riding the marches, or the *hagra*, with small boys in company, who used to be whipped from time to time on the route on large stones, to make the exact boundaries well remembered in after-years by their natural *a-posteriori* recollections of the pain; and these *communities* being burdened with only a slight tax called *scat*—for it is the *udaller* only, of the Magnus Troil breed, that holds them *scat*, vulgarly, '*scot free*,' '*de deo et sole*' as his charter has it—the poorest are in circumstances to feed a few sheep, and to have a share at least in a few ponies. The appearance of the former is far from beautiful. The lambs, indeed, are eminently so, with limbs like the small musk-deer, scarcely thicker than a good quill; elegant and fawn-like heads, and graceful and bounding forms, while they are spotted and striped with gray, brown, black, and white in a manner unseen and unsuspected in sheep before; but when grown, and after their fleece has been touched, they give little outward token, as their deer-like forms and high carried heads sweep past you, that their ragged and tattered coat is of so exquisitely fine a fibre as it is. The explanation was given by our worthy friend Brand, a hundred and fifty years ago. 'Their diversity of colours,' he says, 'would render them very beautiful if taken due care of; but they neither wash nor clip them, nor have they any shears, but tear the wool off with their hands, which, as it is very painful to the poor beasts, so it makes them look not so well-favoured, but like creatures whose skin is scratched with briars and thorns.' This cruel process is defended on this ground, that from the variety of colours and qualities each fleece presents, the hand is the only instrument by which the sorting and parcelling of them could be effected. 'With these handfuls of gray I shall make a veil or two,' says the thrifty housewife; 'and here is enough of white almost for a fine shawl; the brown will do for a pair of socks; and the black and hairy stuff will make a nice warm bed-cover.' Be it so, mistress;

but in what a peculiar accent and phrase you all speak. You have no neuter gender, I find; nor, like your Gaelic cousins, do you *she* everything. The boat you row, as the billow it rides on, is always *he*; and as the shrill high tone in which you end your sentences, like that of one speaking across a tempest, tells of a stormy land, and of sea-calls through winds and waves, so the words you use, gentle maiden, as well as that gracefully wreathed handkerchief round your head, and that jacket, open in front, and fitting so closely to your bust and arms, speak as unequivocally of a northern origin. In truth, we mistook you at first for a Bavarian broom-girl. Thou, is *tow* with you; and three, *tree*. Your cheerful complaisance with our request to let us see how you grind your daily bread on the stone-mill—the *guern* in the corner there—is given in a true German *ya, ya*. While your respected father, who sits mending his *ricelins* on the wooden settle, is addressed in the usual *you*, little Jamie is drawn away from the peat-fire in the centre there with a ‘*du* or a *tu* must away.’ It is of the seed-time you are speaking when you tell us of the work of the *voar*; and it is sandbanks you mean by the *airs* of Stroom; *ouse*, and *gio*, and *roe*, terms you have ever in your pretty mouth, are creeks of the sea, it seems. It is Sunday you mean by the *halv*. The titles by which you designate your companions—Laurence, John’s son; Minna, Peter’s daughter—with the names of your weights and measures, your *bismars* and *hispunds*, are all Danish; and you speak of dear old Scotland as if it were a foreign land.

The ponies cover every pasture, shaggy as bears as yet, with their winter coats, but clearing a five-foot wall like deer. To keep them to their proper domain is simply impossible; and the sheriff of the county has the trouble, in consequence, of seeing that each owner’s mark is recorded in a public register, and verified on any occasion of a dispute about title from its pages. ‘A cross in the right lug and a nick behind; a nip in the left lug and a nick before, and the tail docked,’ are among the peculiar entries that may be found there, and more than ever at present they are worth such vigilance. In consequence of the merciful prohibition of female labour in coal-mines, the active little pony is now employed in their murky galleries; and an animal that, a few years ago, could be purchased for two or three pounds, now brings nearly triple those sums. Sure-footed, easy, sagacious, and docile creatures are they, subsisting on the coarsest and most scanty fare, relishing a thistle top with as satisfied an expression as a donkey, and in spring and winter not disdaining the sea-weed of the rocks. To them, as to the cows of the islands, a boiled fish is a delicious luxury; and they do not, it is said, despise a raw one. Both their instinct and that of the sheep is certainly remarkable in knowing, in the most inland pasture, the precise hour when the ebb occurs, and the shore is available for their hunger. Whether by night or day, and from whatever quarter the wind blows, seaward or landward, the instant the tide begins to turn, down they troop in company to the juicy weeds; but at the same time they grow weak and sickly from the unnatural fare, and are right glad, we doubt not, when the showers of spring have revived the pastures, and sent them bounding to their hills again.

As in all the islands that surround Scotland, the Shetlanders tell you that their ponies were brought hither by the Spanish Armada. The wrecks of that magnificent and impious armament were indeed strewn widely on every shore, from St Kilda in the far west to the coast of Norway; and the little nags that we have seen used by the peasantry on the sandy potato-fields of Benbecula and rocky platforms of Barra, told, by their fine heads and expanded nostrils, broad chest and graceful action, that their ancestors had borne warlike Saracens into battle, and that they

themselves were cousins only once removed from the prancing jennets to be met with in a fair in the Pyrenees; but your long, lump-headed Shetland nag evidently declares itself of a coarser breed. Traces and traditions of the Armada, however, are rife in Shetland. It was on the long steep precipice that forms the western side of Fair Isle that the giant ship of the Duke of Medina Sidonia found destruction. That high-born noble, the haughtiest of even Spanish grandees, was thrown, with 200 of his crew, on this then barbarous and barren rock, that could hardly afford sustenance to its few inhabitants, but who appear at first to have shown their guests a willing hospitality, which they amply requited in gold doubloons, that still, or recently at least, were preserved as heirlooms. But gold was not food. All but fish threatened rapidly to fail them. The Spaniards began to disappear mysteriously, being hurled by the natives in unsuspecting moments from the rocks; and fearful and wild as the roost of Sumburgh is (so the strait of thirty-four miles width that flows between Fair Isle and Shetland is called), the duke had no alternative but to gather the relics of his men and fortune, and with the ship’s boats that were saved, attempt the passage. The family of Humphries still exists by whom the magnificent stranger was received; and Brand, in 1700, conversed with an old gentlewoman, who, when a girl, had often heard her grandmother say that she had seen him, true to his Spanish pride to the last. ‘Did you ever,’ said he to one of his host’s relations, as he sat dressed in the remains of his rich wardrobe, and assuming the look in which nobles gazed themselves—‘did you ever before see a face like mine?’ ‘Farcie on the face!’ cried the blunt islander, ‘I have seen prettier men hanging on the Burra gallows’—the Scalloway place of execution. His pride, however, did not extinguish the compassion or generosity of his entertainers, who landed him safely at Dunkirk, to carry tidings to the haughty cities of the Netherlands that one member at least of their invincible armament survived. Forgotten elsewhere, the traces and memory of his visit still linger in Fair Isle. The Spaniard taught them, with the lichens and plants of the rocks and lakes, to make the brilliant dyes for which they are still celebrated. The gay and fantastic patterns which they work on their hose, gloves, waistcoats, and night-caps, and which make the arrival of a boat from Fair Isle an event even at Lerwick, are all from the Spaniards; and from them too, probably, is their utter ignorance of commerce. The Fair Isle household will deposit on the shopkeeper’s counter a vast pile of these rich and party-coloured materials, to have their value decided by given quantities of tea and sugar, clothes and tobacco; and if, when the barter is concluded, the trader present mother or daughter with an actual sixpence, it is treasured as a charm, and the donor regarded as the most beneficent of human beings.

Six miles to the west of Lerwick is the vale of Scalloway; and when you halt on the brow of the eminence that enables you to command its richly cultivated fields, its church, its manse by the silver lake, its village and bay, and boats and rocks, which form a most pleasing contrast to the dark moor and bare heights through which you have passed, there is much in the scene connected with human feeling to invest it with a higher interest. In that quiet manse there still lives the good old minister who, five-and-fifty years ago, taught the people to avail themselves of the stores of limestone on which they walked; who abolished the old-fashioned, one-shafted ox-plough, then universally employed, for the handier implement of the south; who shewed them what a cart, and a gig, and a good road were like; who was the host and the friend of Sir Walter Scott, when he visited the islands; and whose struggles to overcome the unwillingness of

the people to adopt his improvements, suggested to the great novelist the amusing character—like, however, only on this point—of Triptolemus Yellowley. That rocky islet in the lake was once the throne of justice, where the *Ting* or law-court of appeal was held, and where the *Fowde*, who presided over it, with power of life and death, enthroned himself in rude state to dispense justice to the injured, and to furnish, on yonder hillock on the shore, the 'kindly gallows' with its waving fruit. The quiet churchyard tells you of the worth and final resting-place of the last of these rural judges, 'Thomas Boyne, Fowde of Tingwall, an honest man.' The old gray stone yonder is a battle-monument; and that other commemorates the spot where, a year or two previous to Brand's visit, an old woman and her daughter were burned for witchcraft. But most prominent to the eye, as first in interest, is the stately, though now ruined castle of Earl Patrick Stewart, built amid the groans, and cemented with the blood of oppression. Stimulated by the successful villainies in Orkney of his father, Lord Robert Stewart, a bastard brother of Queen Mary, and desirous to emulate the magnificence of his palace there; Patrick, having received a grant of Shetland from the crown at an easy rent, transferred himself to Scalloway, to ruin, by oppressive exactions of wealth and labour, by confiscation, banishment, and death, every udaller and independent individual within his influence. A deputation of the inhabitants, goaded to desperation, resolved at length to appeal to royalty for protection; and on presenting themselves in their seal-skin coats to King James, obtained that their oppressor should be summoned to repair to Holyrood, with what event we know. We had sailed a few days previously round the Noup of Nesting, admiring the stupendousness of its height, and wondering why the manse of the present parson should have been perched so perilously on its summit, and so near its brink; when we were told that its site commemorates the spot where an unworthy predecessor met his fate. When the welcome news reached Scalloway that the prime oppressor was no more—and here again good Mr Brand may be consulted—the public feeling turned naturally to the parson of Orphir in Orkney, the clerical abettor of his many crimes. Three brothers of the name of Sinclair, udallers whose lands the parson had caused to be confiscated, sought him in his parish in Orkney, pursued him thence to Shetland, hunted him from island to island like sleuth-hounds, overtook him at last in the parish of Nesting, and pursued him as he fled towards its precipice to commit himself apparently to the more merciful arms of the boiling deep. His courage failed him, however. When he faltered in purpose, and sank from terror, his pursuers with a yell were upon him, plunged their daggers into his bosom, and, tearing his heart out, drank his blood. This fearful incident is well remembered in the islands, and strong men still shudder in broad day when they speak of the parson of Orphir and Earl Patrick.

THE FRENCHMAN IN EDINBURGH.

If we were to tell one of even the better-informed class of the French people that the Lord Mayor of London was not at one and the same time Prime Minister, Lord Chancellor, Commander-in-chief, and Lord High Admiral of England, we might have a reasonable chance of being believed. But if we were to tell the same person that there was not a market-place in the city of London, specially made and provided for the purpose, where men, of all ranks and stations in life, publicly and daily bought and sold wives, our assertion would be met with that almost imperceptible raising of the eyebrows and

shoulders, by which a Frenchman, too polite to indicate his unbelief in words, as unequivocally and offensively expresses it in action. This barbarous practice of wife-selling, which, according to learned French authorities, is so prevalent in London, has, as we learn from the same source, progressed northwards, and, having crossed the Tweed, now obtains in the Scottish metropolis. Indeed, M. Paul de Kock, a writer of European reputation, who ought, at least, to know something of the world and its inhabitants, informs us in a sentence that may be very witty and very logical, but of which we cannot exactly discover the point, that 'the Scotch are advancing in civilisation. They do not wear pantaloons; but they sell their wives, and that makes up for it.'

How the writer happened to have a peep at Edinburgh life, through a mental telescope of the French pattern, was simply thus. Passing one of the minor Parisian theatres—*Le Théâtre des Folies-Nouvelles*—lately, our attention was attracted by a gaudily printed *affiche*, announcing that one of the pieces to be performed the same evening was written by M. Paul de Kock, and entitled *A Wife to be Sold; (Femme à Vendre)*; moreover, that the scene was laid in Edinburgh. Ever anxious to acquire, and, if possible, to distribute information, we determined to witness the performance; and having done so, now proceed to introduce the piece, with its principal *dramatis personæ*, to the readers of this *Journal*.

One Blaireau, a Parisian sign-painter, and a wild young scamp as well, is much struck by accidentally hearing the following chorus sung in one of M. Scribe's operas:

Oh, the Scottish mountaineer,
The open-handed mountaineer,
Will give for nothing the best of cheer.

The sign-painter, whose inferiority as an artist reduces him to receive the lowest rate of remuneration, is, nevertheless, afflicted with as insatiable a love of pleasure as the highest wages would permit him to enjoy. In short, if he expends his earnings on pleasure, he must starve—if he expends them on food, he must relinquish pleasure; but life without pleasure is scarcely more endurable to him than death from want of food: consequently, the chorus of the opera, setting forth the hospitable character of the Scottish people, seems a happy clue to guide him out of his distressing dilemma. He at once determines to proceed to Scotland, and there, living for nothing, to earn a large sum of money by painting signs for the savage but hospitable mountaineers; to, afterwards, joyfully return and spend his gains among the delightful gaieties of Paris. Accordingly, he sets out on his journey, and in due time arriving in Edinburgh, he takes up his quarters at the sign of the Golden Lion, kept, of course, by a Scotchman, rejoicing in the very national cognomen of Bil Boque. As may be supposed, this Edinburgh landlord is a character. He wears a red kilt, red stockings, red garters, red coat, and red night-cap, the ineffectual redness of all which, however, is paled by the blazing rubescence of his hair and beard; while his no less rubicund face is covered with numerous fiery excrescences, resembling Bailey's beads on the disc of the eclipsed sun. He has also, when not speaking, a curious habit of twisting his body in a peculiar and indescribable manner, as if he wished somehow or other to wriggle himself out of his skin; a movement that seldom fails in bringing down the rapturous applause of the easily pleased spectators.

The 'bros,' 'hagahis,' 'afnafs,' and 'grocs' of the Golden Lion are little to the taste of the refined Parisian sign-painter; but he admires those very curiously orthographised edibles and potables still less, when he finds that the sordid, savage landlord

